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| Nota di contenuto | Your mother and I / Dave Eggers -- Ballad of Duane Jaurez / Tom Franklin -- In the American society / Gish Jen -- Gogol / Jhumpa Lahiri -- Refresh, refresh / Benjamin Percy -- Smorgasbord / Tobias Wolfe -- How to date a brown girl (black girl, white girl, or halfie) / Junot Diaz -- In the cemetery where Al Jolson is buried / Amy Hempel -- Metamorphosis / John Updike -- Think / David Foster Wallace -- Expensive trips nowhere / Tom Bissell -- Near-extinct birds of the central Cordillera / Ben Fountain -- Shiloh / Bobbie Ann Mason -- COMMCOMM / George Saunders -- Mines / Susan Straight -- Skinless / Aimee Bender -- View from a headlock / Jonathan Lethem -- Brownies / Zz Packer -- Pie of the month / Jean Thompson -- Day / Charles Bukowski -- Scales / Louise Erdrich -- Something that needs nothing / Miranda July -- Equal opportunity / Walter Mosley -- Passenger / Marisa Silver. |
| Sommario/riassunto | Late twentieth and early twenty-first century America has been labeled as "The New Gilded Age," a phrase that embodies the glitz and glamour of one of the wealthiest countries in the world but also suggests the greed, corruption, and inequalities teeming just below the surface. Identifying some of the sparkling moments of humanity interwoven |

between the moments of crisis, *Best of Times, Worst of Times* features short stories by such renowned writers as Junot Diaz, George Saunders, Jhumpa Lahiri, Tobias Wolff, and many others, whose distinctive authorial voices lend urgency and a sense of heightened awareness to the modern moment. Commenting on and making sense of what is going on in America today, fractured as it is by two ongoing wars, the aftermath of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the worst economic collapse since the Great Depression, these stories speak to some of the most germane issues confronting America today, from race relations, immigration, and social class to gender issues, Iraq, and imperialism. These expertly culled, emotionally powerful stories provide the perfect mirror with which to examine the real state of the union.
